

SATO et al.
Serial No. 09/855,547

Atty Dkt: 914-129
Art Unit: 2173

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reexamination of the captioned application is respectfully requested.

Applicants have amended the dependencies of claims 5, 11, and 17 so that these claims now depend from active claims. Moreover, independent claim 19 has been amended to moot the rejection formulated under 35 USC §112, second paragraph.

Claims 1-3, 7-9, 13-15 and 19-22 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being clearly anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,369,821 to Merrill et al. Claims 5, 6, 11, 12, 17 and 18 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,369,821 to Merrill et al. and U.S. Patent 6,637,029 to Maissel et al. All prior art rejections are respectfully traversed for at least the following reasons.

Claims 1, 7, and 13 are respectively directed to an agent display apparatus, an agent display method, and a storage medium for executing an agent display method for displaying a personified agent for making the agent selectively perform a process. In the embodiment illustrated in Fig. 3, the apparatus comprises a first interface (1) for controlling display of the agent and for inputting a request from a user; a second interface (2) for controlling an application program; an action script storing portion (5) for storing an action script describing a procedure of controlling the first interface and the second interface; a searching portion (4) for searching in the action script storing portion for the action script. The searching portion (4) searches for the action script in accordance with the request input from the first interface. The action script searched for follows the described procedure. The first interface controls display of the agent to start the application program. An executing portion controls (3) the application program through the second interface.

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Independent claim 19 is more specifically directed to coordinated control of a personified agent and an application program which operates in conjunction with an (external) audio/visual appliance.

In the remarks included in the Amendment filed September 14, 2005, Applicants argued that Merrill stresses directive, not responsive, activity by the Merrill application. In other words, it is Merrill's application(s) that request animation services from server 100 for synchronizing (scripted) animations, i.e., Merrill's applications request synchronization of actions of characters in response to events. Applicants further argued (relative to independent claim 19) that the applied prior art lacked any teaching of coordinated control of an application program (for operating an external appliance) and a personified agent, or a teaching that the personified agent serve to report operations affecting the external apparatus.

In response to Applicants' September 14, 2005 arguments, the top of page 8 of the final office action (and particularly the second paragraph), appears to point to Fig. 12 and column 40 of Merrill as supposedly teaching how an "application with the animation is further controlled by the server, and animation systems." Yet in col. 40 and the remainder of Merrill, Merrill does not teach or suggest an application program which is started by an agent, with display of the agent being controlled by a first interface whose procedure is described by an action script. Rather, Merrill's scripts 502, 504 are part of Merrill's applications for controlling animation, and Merrill's applications are intended to be active in dictating animation, rather than the applications (for starting an audio/visual application) being controlled via an animated character.

Thus, Merrill does not teach an action script, where the action script describes a procedure of controlling said first interface and said second interface, the first interface

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controlling display of a personified agent and the second interface being involved in control of an application program, and wherein the agent starts the application program.

In view of the foregoing and other considerations, Applicants request that all prior art rejections be withdrawn and urge that all claims are deemed in condition for allowance. A formal indication of allowability is earnestly solicited.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge the undersigned's deposit account #14-1140 in whatever amount is necessary for entry of these papers and the continued pendency of the captioned application.

Should the Examiner feel that an interview with the undersigned would facilitate allowance of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,
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